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REVIEWS.

PURITAN AND ANGLICAN. *Studies in Literature.* By Edward Dowden.
New York : Henry Holt and Company. 1901. \$2.

Everything that Mr. Dowden writes is sure to receive attention. The revealer of Shakespeare's Mind and Art to hundreds of beginners and students, the author of the monumental "Life of Shelley," the editor and interpreter of Wordsworth, he had made himself master of the periods of the Renaissance and Romanticism in English literature. Here we have a new period in our literature examined and revealed.

The Seventeenth Century has been too far neglected by our modern scholars—students of Elizabethan, Augustan, Georgian, and Victorian ages. For instance, Mr. Saintsbury has a volume on the "Sixteenth Century" which includes one half of the seventeenth, and Mr. Gosse has one on the "Eighteenth Century" which treats of the other half; but between the two the seventeenth century goes by default. Mr. Dowden's volume will go a long way toward atoning for this neglect.

Mr. Dowden is perhaps the master literary critic now holding a professor's chair in Great Britain and Ireland, it being the Irish University in which he holds his professorship, though he has honorary doctorates from leading Scottish, English, and American universities.

Mr. Dowden need not apologize for his selection of names: they are of perennial interest to students and lovers of literature. He chooses the names he loves best in this period and knows intimately. And he tells of these friends in a manner containing all the charm of style that culture and love and intimacy can give. A general introduction on "Puritanism and English literature"—which leads to some new distinctions and definitions—and essays on Browne, Hooker, Herbert and Vaughan, Milton as an exponent of civil liberty, and of ecclesiastical and theological liberty, Jeremy Taylor and Baxter, Bunyan and Samuel Butler,

concluded by a "Transition to the Eighteenth Century," are Mr. Dowden's subjects.

First of all, it is a student of literature writing, one who is steeped in the thoughts of these writers and has regard for every word concerning them. His general method is to let authors and their writings, by a series of happy interpretations, speak for themselves. By quoting some passages and giving the gist of others, Mr. Dowden furnishes sympathetic pictures of the minds of his subjects, as from long and intimate acquaintance he understands and interprets them.

Of Sir Thomas Browne, "contemplative charity, illuminated wonder—these were his possessions, or rather by these he was possessed." "Wonder and love" are taken as the keynotes of the character of this strange physician who was "skeptical of many things commonly believed, credulous of many things which others doubted."

There is no better essay in the book than the one on Richard Hooker, who is excusably included because, while dying in 1600, his spiritual influence was not really felt until the seventeenth century. Hooker is one of the most difficult subjects to present calmly and dispassionately. His character is summed up in an eloquent concluding sentence: "It is his high distinction that he cannot be identified with any party within the English Church; in his method and in his temper he represents nothing less than the better mind of England; its courage and its prudence; its audacity and its spirit of reverence; its regard for principles and its dislike of doctrinaire abstractions; its capacity for speculation controlled by its consideration of circumstances; its respect for the past and its readiness for new developments; its practical tendency; its lofty common sense."

The characters of Herbert and Vaughan reveal themselves by happy interpretative quotations. While admitting the greater importance of Herbert, Mr. Dowden believes Vaughan more imaginatively endowed as a poet. "Of vital gold there is far more in his poetry than can be found in that of his master and model. But Herbert was better

skilled in coining his metal in the mint, and so he gave it a more extended currency." Herbert "is the interpreter of an ideal of beauty in order." Again, "he is the poet of the Anglican communion, and has benefited by all the advantage of harmony with an established system." Vaughan "is the poet of what cannot be methodised—the incalculable beams and irradiation of the soul, the incalculable wind that blows where it listeth; his garden is watered by the sudden shower and the invisible dew."

The two essays on Milton treat the prose writings as complement to the poems. "They are a sword or some fiercer two-handed engine wielded on behalf of civil and religious liberty." The keynote of Milton's work, whether as a poet or a combatant in prose, rests in two words: liberty and obedience. Milton's central thought is "freedom tending to a higher obedience." Thus the pamphlets on divorce, education, and political questions are pleas for domestic or public liberty. Quoting Sir John Seeley, "Milton is in a special group of thinkers like Coleridge and Ruskin and Carlyle—men of genius who apply to politics one or two intense convictions." As an apostle for ecclesiastical liberty he speaks plainly in the prose "Treatise on Christian Doctrine," and imaginatively in "Paradise Lost" and "Paradise Regained." One of the interesting features of the second essay is the emphasis on Milton's freedom and independence in theological conceptions. Comparing the two epics is one of Mr. Dowden's picturesque sentences: "'Paradise Regained' bears to 'Paradise Lost' somewhat of the relation which a lady chapel bears to a cathedral; it is less vast, but not less sacred."

Less emphasis is laid upon Jeremy Taylor than might be expected. In contrast, Richard Baxter—whose "Saint's Rest" was once found in every library, but is now generally neglected—is one of those for whom Mr. Dowden speaks with a regard akin to enthusiasm. Baxter's absolute sincerity, the steady growth of his sympathies, and particularly his wide charity, appeal to our essayist, who pertinently remarks: "The lost causes have not always been the worst."

The essay on Bunyan is one of the longest. It is Bunyan as the author of "Pilgrim's Progress" that receives the emphasis. "What gives vitality to the 'Pilgrim's Progress' is not its Puritanism as such, but rather its Christian spirit and more than this its profound humanity." Again, Bunyan "was no mystic in the vulgar meaning of that word, but a downright practical Englishman, who happened to be also a man of imaginative genius." Contrary to most opinions in general and Mr. Froude's in particular, Mr. Dowden believes "we could ill spare the second part of the 'Pilgrim's Progress.' . . . The manly tenderness of Bunyan's heart finds expression here as it does nowhere else."

Butler, the author of "Hudibras," is treated from a fresh and remarkably sane point of view. The poem "is a plea on behalf of what he thought his age most needed—good sense. The purpose of the whole is to put laughter to use in the cause of reason." And yet "the satirist of the Restoration was not among the sons of the prophet. . . . If in all his writings we could find one outbreak of noble charity, we should value at a higher rate the criticism of his remorseless intelligence."

But these fragmentary excerpts must suffice to give an imperfect idea of the illuminating spirit that fills these essays. It is a trained and virile intelligence dealing with matters literary and obtaining literary utterance.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE. Poet, Dramatist, and Man. By Hamilton Wright Mabie. With one hundred illustrations, including nine full pages in photogravure. New York: The Macmillan Company. 1901. \$3.50.

The modern attitude of Shakespearean criticism was introduced by Coleridge, that poet-critic of marvelous intuition and spiritual sympathy. He was the first successfully to oppose the notion long current of a *lusus naturæ*, or the "inspired idiot" theory. From that time on Shakespeare's plays were regarded as the result of the author's genius operating under natural laws—laws to be understood and interpreted in accord with psychological truth. The appearance of Mr. Dowden's "Mind and Art" of Shakespeare, and his